

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A pinion carrier comprising:
 - a first annular body having an outer surface and an inner surface and a plurality of legs projecting from the circumference of the inner surface and terminating in a flat surface;
 - 5 a second annular body having an outer surface and an inner surface and a plurality of legs projecting from the circumference of the inner surface and terminating on a flat surface; and
 - 10 the flat surfaces of the legs of said first annular body being joined to the flat surface of the respective legs of the second annular body.
- 15 2. Method of producing a pinion carrier for planetary gear assembly comprising the steps of:
 - 1) cold forming a first cup-shaped body having an outer surface and an inner surface and a circumferential side wall with a longitudinal central axis and including a plurality of spaced apart legs terminating in flat surfaces;
 - 20 2) cold forming a second cup-shaped body having an outer surface and an inner surface and a circumferential side wall with a longitudinal central axis and including a plurality of spaced apart legs terminating in flat surfaces;
 - 25 3) causing the first and second bodies to be positioned such that the flat surfaces of the legs

of the respective bodies are in juxtaposed contacting relation; and

4) welding the contacting surfaces of the legs of the bodies together.

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3. The method defined in Claim 2 wherein at least one of the cup-shaped bodies is provided with a centrally formed aperture.

10 4. The method defined in claim 3 including the step of joining a torque transfer structure to circumscribe the aperture in one of the cup-shaped bodies or creating a gear/spline as an integral part of at least one of the cup-shaped bodies.

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5. The method defined in claim 4 including the step of forming planetary gear shaft apertures to extend from the outer surface to the inner surface of cup-shaped bodies.

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